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From Provost to President

03.31.2008 | Faculty

Fred P. Pestello, provost and senior vice president for educational affairs at the University of Dayton, has been named president of Le Moyne College, a Catholic, Jesuit liberal arts college in Syracuse, N.Y. His presidency begins on July 1.

A sociologist, Pestello joined UD's sociology faculty in 1984. For the past seven years, he's served as UD's chief academic officer. Previously, he was associate dean in the College of Arts and Sciences for three-and-a-half years and chaired the department of sociology, anthropology and

social work for four years.

"I am excited to have the opportunity to lead a fine Jesuit college," Pestello said. "I feel well prepared for the challenges ahead because I have been fortunate to work with two impressive presidents -- Daniel Curran and Brother Raymond Fitz, S.M. -- who nurtured my professional growth, entrusted me with substantial responsibility and allowed me to participate in all areas of executive responsibility and decision making.

Pestello, 55, leaves the University of Dayton with mixed feelings, but is excited about the challenge of leading a Catholic college with a mission that mirrors his educational philosophy. "Over the past 24 years, I have been blessed with the most wonderful colleagues, mentors, friends and students that one can imagine. These relationships blossomed within an academic community of faith that displays a deep sense of family spirit. UD will forever be with me. At the same time, I'm drawn to Le Moyne's mission of educating the whole person and preparing students to live faith-filled lives of leadership and service."

Curran said Pestello's leadership will be missed on campus. Noting Pestello's work in crafting a new vision statement and a strategic plan for campus, he called him "a strategist." He also praised him for being "a strong advocate for the faculty," building a capable leadership team and developing academically excellent programs.

"This is a loss for the University of Dayton and for me, personally, but he's fully prepared to be a college president," Curran said.

Founded in 1946, Le Moyne College enrolls approximately 2,800 undergraduate and 800 graduate students. Like the University of Dayton, it is deeply committed to community service.

Pestello replaces John Smarrelli, interim president and the first lay leader in Le Moyne's history. Pestello will be introduced to the Le Moyne campus community at an April 1 news conference.

As a scholar, Pestello co-wrote the 1993 book *Sentiments and Acts*, which takes a critical look at social science research and theory. He's co-authored articles about "Faculty Attitudes and Hiring Practices at Selected Catholic Colleges and Universities" and coordinated the University of Dayton's response to *Ex corde Ecclesiae*, the 1990 Vatican document on Catholic higher education. He has served on a number of local, state and national boards, including the national advisory council for *Fostering Student Development Through Faculty Development* funded by Lilly Endowment Inc. and the John Templeton Foundation.

Pestello holds three degrees in sociology -- a Ph.D. from the University of Akron-Kent State, a master's degree from the University of Akron and a bachelor's degree from John Carroll University. His family includes wife Fran, chair of the department of sociology, anthropology and social work at the University of Dayton; daughter, Vitina, a junior double majoring in international studies and economics at UD; and son, Ferdinando, a senior at Centerville High School.